

VZCZCXRO4125
PP RUEH DU RUEHMR RUEHPA RUEHRN RUEHROV RUEHTRO
DE RUEHFR #0859/01 1231447
ZNY SSSSS ZZH
P 021447Z MAY 08
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2895
INFO RUEHZO/AFRICAN UNION COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUCNIAD/IGAD COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHTRO/AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI PRIORITY 0125
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS PRIORITY 2293
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 PARIS 000859

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

EUCOM PLEASE PASS AFRICOM

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/02/2018

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [PINS](#) [UNSC](#) [SU](#) [FR](#)

SUBJECT: SUDAN/DARFUR: SPECIAL ENVOY WILLIAMSON'S APRIL 15
MEETING WITH JEM DELEGATION

REF: PARIS 741

PARIS 00000859 001.2 OF 003

Classified By: Acting Political Counselor William Jordan, 1.4 (b/d).

¶1. (S) SUMMARY: Special Envoy for Sudan Richard Williamson met with a seven-member JEM delegation from the UK, France, Chad, Egypt, and Darfur in Paris on April 15 as part of a three-track approach to making progress in Sudan: 1) engagement with the government of Sudan (GOS) on improving U.S./Sudan relations, 2) exploration of punitive measures in the likely event of lack of progress, and 3) engagement with rebel movements outside of the AU/UN-led peace negotiations for an inclusive process and a negotiated settlement to the Darfur conflict. SE Williamson thanked the delegation for its participation while noting his disappointment on the absence of their leader Dr. Khalil Ibrahim. He informed the delegation that he had spoken to Ibrahim by phone moments before and solicited the specific steps that would bring JEM to the table to continue a dialogue towards peace. The JEM delegation members praised this meeting as a momentous opportunity and expressed their gratitude for the chance to engage with the U.S. and their hope for a new era of collaboration. The delegation called for new leadership for the Darfur political process, a comprehensive approach to peace, and a framework agreement. The delegation reiterated JEM's support for UNAMID and urged the U.S. to use its leverage to stop China's support to the Sudanese government. The JEM representatives reaffirmed Khalil Ibrahim's willingness to meet SE Williamson anytime at an appropriate venue, preferably in the liberated areas in Darfur, in the near future. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (C) Special Envoy for Sudan Richard Williamson, accompanied by USUN Jana Chapman Gates and AF/SPG Olukemi Yai (notetaker), met in Paris on April 15 with a Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) delegation composed of Ahmed Hussain Adam (JEM Spokesperson), El Sadig Yousif Hassan (Head of JEM in France), Gibril Mohamed (Economic Advisor), El Tahir el Faki (Speaker of the Legislative Council), Mahmoud Abbaker Suleiman (Deputy Chairman, General Congress), Adam Tugood Lissan (Chief Negotiator), and Dr. Abdullahi Osman el-Tom (Strategy Planning Secretary). This followed SE Williamson's meeting the previous day with French officials (reftel) and with SLM/AW leader Abdul Wahid Al Nur (septel).

WHEN ACTORS CHANGE THEIR BEHAVIORS,

U.S. IS WILLING TO EXPLORE CHANGE
IN POLITICAL DYNAMIC, NO STRINGS ATTACHED

13. (S) SE Williamson explained to the delegation that the context in which JEM was being contacted was part of a three-track approach to solving the Darfur conflict, involving 1) engagement with the Government of Sudan (GOS) on improving U.S./Sudan relations; 2) exploration of punitive measures in the likely event of lack of progress; and 3) engagement with rebel movements outside of the AU/UN-led peace negotiations for an inclusive process and a negotiated settlement to the conflict. SE Williamson explained that the GOS had recently made a sincere overture in its attempt to improve relations with the U.S. and that we must seize this opportunity to make progress on all fronts and achieve good results. Recognizing JEM's pivotal role in achieving peace in Darfur, President Bush had authorized dialogue with Dr. Khalil Ibrahim. SE Williamson's meeting with JEM was intended to explore and exchange views to understand what would bring JEM to the table simply to continue dialogue, not necessarily to commit the movement to anything specific.

14. (C) In response to SE Williamson's remark on Khalil Ibrahim's absence, the delegation noted that JEM decision-making was collective. JEM was an institution and, therefore, Khalil Ibrahim's absence should not be exaggerated, as the delegation constituted the core decision-making body within JEM. SE Williamson shared that, although the U.S. would like to see the conflict in Darfur resolved, the U.S. also realized that the international community, including the U.S., and UNAMID could only assist in bringing peace if the people, particularly the key leaders of Darfur, were committed to helping end "200 years of marginalization in Darfur."

15. (C) SE Williamson noted that he hoped that together we

PARIS 00000859 002.2 OF 003

could explore the pathway to peace in Darfur. SE Williamson cited the case of Libya's abandoning its various WMD programs and the subsequent U.S. policy change as an example of a revision in policy when actors changed their behavior. SE Williamson urged JEM to think about participating in discussions during this fleeting window of opportunity, because any progress that could be made would happen within the next few months. The GOS feared what might happen with a new U.S. administration and was ready to explore solutions now. SE Williamson invited JEM to join the process with no strings attached. He intimated that any framework and pathway towards peace would require a cessation of hostilities, an end of "marginalization," more political possibilities (including autonomy for Darfur), fair and adequate representation in Khartoum, and a future agreement that must address the legitimate concerns of the Darfuris.

JEM COMMITTED TO "PEACE AND THE RIGHTS OF OUR PEOPLE"

16. (C) The JEM delegation thanked the U.S. for the opportunity to discuss the situation and reiterated JEM's belief that the appropriate way to solve the Darfur conflict was through political means. JEM wanted to engage but needed to be consulted on the issues to be addressed, the venue for negotiations, and the delegation to be invited. Strategy Planning Secretary el-Tom assured SE Williamson that JEM had no plans to play a wait-and-see game, could not afford the continued killing of the people of Darfur, and would like to see the conflict resolved now. Concerning what it would take to come to the table, JEM shared four main concerns: First, JEM deplored a lack of leadership and vision within the Joint Mediation Support Team (JMST) and viewed it as an obstacle to progress towards a peaceful resolution. JEM called for a fresh "gentleman" to lead the mediation. JEM would support genuine mediation efforts -- unlike the public relations being conducted by Eliasson and Salim Salim -- and urged that a political mechanism be established to push the mediation forward, which should include the U.S.

17. (C) A second concern, according to Chief Negotiator Tugood, was that the JMST was detached from the realities on the ground. JEM was no longer just a military force but had gained popular support even in the IDP camps, because the people were no longer supporting "people who are far away." JEM accused the JMST of failing to come to Darfur to investigate these new developments. JEM lamented that JMST had now created a new dilemma by recognizing new factions with no real popular support or military power as "movements," thereby encouraging bandits to come together under the guise of representing legitimate factions. JEM asked that JMST make a distinction between common bandits and legitimate movements, and asked that JMST focus its efforts on "serious people," those who were engaged in Abuja, such as JEM and the SLA. JEM also claimed that "no one could face the GOS except JEM/SLA."

18. (C) A third concern was the lack of a conclusive and comprehensive approach to peace. According to JEM, Darfur was in part a result of the CPA, and JEM, being a national movement, could not simply look at the conflict in Darfur from a regional perspective. JEM was concerned that, if a comprehensive approach were not adopted, conflict could later erupt in the Kordofan area or the east, "forcing" JEM to defend its interest in those regions. According to the delegation, JEM had worked hard to bring grassroots elements together; even Arabs had now joined in JEM's struggle. At the international level, JEM had approached international actors and had even engaged the Chinese.

19. (C) The other (fourth) issue raised by JEM was the need for a framework agreement prior to a cease-fire agreement. JEM accused the international community of rushing to a cease-fire agreement, which would fail without a solid discussion and agreement on the basic issues. This discussion and agreement must take place before the signing of any cessation of hostilities, which could then be followed by a proper cease-fire agreement that must be accompanied by a monitoring mechanism. JEM cited the success of the Machakos protocol, signed between the GOS and the SPLM in 2002, as a model. JEM claimed it wanted a symbolic victory

PARIS 00000859 003.2 OF 003

for Darfur, similar to the way the CPA had brought a symbolic victory to the people of the south.

JEM IS NOT A WAR MONGER; BEWARE OF THE GOS;
THE NEW U.S.-JEM FRIENDSHIP

10. (C) JEM was not a war monger, but military action was a complement to the political track inasmuch as the GOS believed in a military solution to Darfur, said Faki. The GOS was not ready for peace or a comprehensive solution. As long as it was perceived as cooperating with the U.S., the GOS would continue to seek a military solution to Darfur.

11. (C) Faki noted that the U.S. had had a negative view of JEM in the past, although JEM was a real friend. JEM shared the same democratic ideals and the search for regional stability, economic development, and prosperity. JEM also supported the CPA and humanitarian objectives. JEM noted the CPA as the biggest achievement of the Bush Administration and urged the U.S. to pressure Nafie to address the concerns of the Darfuris. JEM also emphasized its support for UNSC Resolution 1769 and claimed to be among the first to call for UNAMID to protect the people, even though JEM was not being consulted by UNAMID, no longer had representation in the cease-fire, had been expelled from El Fasher, and was afraid UNAMID would be manipulated by the GOS and would inherit AMIS's weaknesses. El-Tom reiterated that there would be no peace in Darfur or democratization in Sudan without U.S. involvement. The U.S. had a proven track record of reconstruction and development initiatives that Darfur would

need.

PLEASE MAKE CHINA ACT RESPONSIBLY

¶12. (C) JEM accused China of lacking good governance and democratic ideals and decried China's involvement in Sudan. JEM implored the U.S. to use its leverage on China to pressure the GOS to change its behavior. SE Williamson assured the delegation that China would not be able to obstruct actions concerning Sudan in the Security Council in the next few months as we approached the Olympics, with China becoming more nervous about raising the profile of other international issues when already confronted by the Tibet problem.

BE SERIOUS OR WALK AWAY NOW

¶13. (C) SE Williamson concluded the meeting by reiterating that the U.S. interest was not in pressuring the movements or their leaders but rather in seeking a pathway to stop the killing and find sustainable peace in Darfur. He reminded JEM that the GOS was ready to explore possibilities and that the US was inviting JEM to do the same. He cautioned JEM against using the invitation as a tool to buy time, as SE Williamson would ensure that JEM would regret this tactic. SE Williamson promised to be as firm, if not firmer, with the GOS if JEM chose to accept the invitation. He reminded the delegation of the need to strike while the iron was hot, and he would be waiting to hear JEM's decision the following week before he testified before Congress on why we were engaged in dialogue with the JEM. He informed the delegation that politically it would be easier for the U.S. to punish both the movements and the GOS, but that President Bush had chosen dialogue as the pathway to finding sustainable peace in Darfur.

¶14. (U) SE Williamson's office has cleared this message.

¶15. (U) Minimize considered.

Please visit Paris' Classified Website at:
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/paris/index.cfm>

STAPLETON